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ABSTRACT

Prepositions are usually presented as prepositions of time or place, and prepositions associated with certain verbs and adjectives. However, this type of presentation overlooks the bases for preposition usage and in turn fails to convey those bases to learners. An alternative approach to the analysis of prepositions from a notional perspective is offered based on the following circumstances of preposition usage: (1) an utterance/sentence-level notion; (2) a notion underlying the expression of two separate but related utterances/sentences, which is brought to the surface upon their combination; (3) a rhetorical or lexical-rhetorical notion (or, in some cases, linguistic function) of a modified clause; (4) a rhetorical or lexical-rhetorical notion through the process of analogy with circumstance three; and (5) a rhetorical notion in conjunction with the process of paraphrasing. Each of these circumstances is analyzed and illustrated by numerous examples. It is advocated that teachers use the analyses and examples when explanations are necessary or when they are solicited by learners. In these cases, explanations can eradicate learners' impressions that preposition usage is illogical and help learners to acquire facility more easily in usage. (AMH)

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Preposition-usage from a notional perspective

Patrick S. J. Ruffin

Introduction

In this paper an alternative means of analyzing forms known as prepositions will be presented. Analyses will be from a notional perspective and will be based on the proposition that there are five circumstances of preposition-usage. In order to better appreciate these five circumstances, however, a particular phenomenon should first be considered. According to a traditional structural view of English, most verbs can be followed by a direct object and/or a prepositional phrase. Contrastively from a semantic standpoint, one of the general notions (lexical and lexical-rhetorical) that such verbs can represent is action, and with actions, the structural direct object can represent part of an action, an affected, or an effected. While Fillmore (1968:4-5) refers to the latter two lexical-rhetorical notions, the first entity may be novel. Examples of parts of actions are contained in do homework, do the dishes, watch TV, and study English, where homework, the dishes, TV, and English actually indicate the essence of the actions rather than the structural verbs, i.e. the action-nuclei do, watch, and study.

As far as prepositions are concerned, it can be said that they are initially brought into play either when an entity that follows an action or action-nucleus is not an affected or effected or part of an action, respectively, or when an entity follows one of these three items. For speakers of SOV languages such as Japanese and Korean, realizing that prepositions must be used under these conditions should precede their absorbing themselves in the notions which determine preposition-usage. In other words, it has been observed that such learners of English must first realize that prepositions must be used to either separate actions from nonparts of ac-

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tions, nonaffecteds, and noneffecteds or to separate parts of actions, affecteds, and effecteds from other entities. These phenomena must also be considered by speakers of Indoeuropean languages, who sometimes tend to omit prepositions, due either to their not knowing what preposition to use or to their feeling that a preposition is not necessary. Also, the fact that prepositions can occur at the end of questions in English may contribute to that tendency for those speakers as well as for speakers of SOV languages.

Circumstance 1

When it has been established by learners that prepositions must be used, the next step is to consider what notion determines what preposition and the nature of that determination. To begin with, circumstance of preposition-usage 1 depends on notions at the utterance/sentence level. The nature of the existence of these notions varies, whereby this circumstance of preposition-usage can be divided into circumstances 1a to 1h. With circumstance 1a, notions which determine preposition-usage result from a relationship which implicates the element following the preposition of an utterance/sentence, the expressed action of that utterance/sentence, and the doer of that action. This circumstance of preposition-usage is illustrated by examples 1-12; the notion determining preposition-usage is indicated after each example.

1. He works at a bank. (Location)

2/3. She's working in the house today rather than in the garden. (Location, 3 dimensions; location, 2 dimensions)

4. You shouldn't walk on that floor; it's just been waxed. (Location, 1 dimension)[1]

[1] Dimension is not being used in the usual geometric sense here. A location that has three dimensions is one that has a bottom, sides, and a top; one that has two dimensions is one that has a bottom and sides; and one that has one dimension is one that only has a bottom.

5. The Argentine planes flew over elements of the British fleet stafing and bombing as they went. (Height)

6. She swam under the water for the longest time. (Depth)

7. He searched near the lamppost for his wallet. (Proximity, intermediate space)

8. He sat down next to his wife. (Proximity, no intermediate space)

9. He ran between the two defensive players. (Middle)

10. The man fainted and fell against the wall. (Touching)

11. Some did not participate in the meeting. (Activity)

12. Notre Dame did not play in a bowl game this past season. (Event)

As for circumstance 1b, in addition to the entities involved in circumstance 1a, preposition-usage is influenced by movement, a general lexical notion represented by certain verbs in addition to the more general lexical notion action. Examples 13-23 illustrate this circumstance of preposition-usage.

13. He went to the store an hour ago. (Location, destination)

14. She rushed into the restaurant. (Location, 3 dimensions, destination)

15. The leaves floated into the gutter. (Location, 2 dimensions, destination)

16. The Philadelphia Eagles ran onto the field. (Location, 1 dimension, destination)
17. People continue to escape from East Germany. (Location, origin)
18. The residents clammered out of the burning house. (Location, 3 dimensions, origin)
19. The baby fell out of his crib. (Location, 2 dimensions, origin)
20. The papers blew off the desk. (Location, 1 dimension, origin)
21. She walked through the room checking the furniture for dust. (Location, 3 dimensions, nondestination)
22. A rabbit scurried through their vegetable garden. (Location, 2 dimensions, nondestination)
23. She hurried by me without saying a word. (Proximity, intermediate space)

With the data given so far, certain learner-errors can be analyzed. That is, the learner who utters He is into the room has not learned or acquired the conditions of circumstance 1b; s/he does not realize that the notion movement must obtain for the notion destination to obtain, which would call for the usage of into. Likewise, the learner who utters He went in the room, in not being short for into, only perceives room in terms of circumstance 1a, where in relation to the general notion action of go and the doer He, it represents location and 3 dimensions; however, s/he has failed to take room to circumstance 1b, to the next notional level, where the more specific general notion movement as enjoyed by go applies, whereby room also represents destination, which calls for into.

Conversely, the learner who says/writes visit to (a country) is incor-

rectly applying circumstance 1b; while countries are of course locations, visit does not enjoy the notion movement, whereby the notion destination does not obtain. What is more, circumstance 1a does not even apply. That is, since Korea, for example, in visit Korea constitutes the essence of an action, the action-nucleus visit and part of an action Korea should not be separated by a preposition.

Similar to circumstance 1b, notions which determine circumstance 1c result from other more specific general notions than action. Those notions are speech act, transitional process, transition, and negation, as respectively illustrated by examples 24-27.

24a. I'll respond to your question in a minute. (Reaction)

b. Many students object to homework. (Reaction)

c. I spoke to Martha yesterday about that matter. (Reaction)

25a(1). Because of the increase in crime, many people are resorting to buying firearms for their protection. (Reaction)

(2). He's going to have to conform to the rules and regulations of the school. (Reaction)

b(1). The apartment complex is gradually turning into a better place to live. (Transition)

(2). Over the years he changed into a grouch. (Transition)

26a. We'll begin at 9:00. (Point in time)

b. She arrived in the summer. (Period of time, understood point in time)

c(1). After 20 years of service, he retired from the military. (Separation)

(2). The people have fled from the hostilities in the

countryside. (Separation)

27a. On Good Friday Catholics are supposed to abstain from meat. (Separation)

b. The dog knows he did something wrong and is hiding from his master. (Separation)

Circumstance 1c is also similar to circumstance 1b as well as 1a in that the element following a preposition, an action, and the doer of the action contribute to the existence of certain notions which ultimately determine preposition-usage. However, while such notions gravitate to the element following the preposition when circumstances 1a and 1b apply, such notions permeate the entire utterance/sentence when circumstance 1c applies. Moreover, in relation to the latter phenomenon, it should also be noted that with utterances/sentences such as 25b(1) and (2), in which the notion transition is part of the notional makeup of turn and change, the usage of into should not be attributed to that lexical existence of the notion, but to its existence at the utterance/sentence level. All in all, when confronted with circumstance 1c either in terms of production or perception, learners must initiate a pattern of processing which encompasses an entire utterance/sentence rather than one which eventually focusses on an individual word.

A more specific observation regarding circumstance 1c is concerned with the notion reaction as illustrated by examples 24a, b, and c. From those examples it may be inferred why speakers of such different languages as Spanish and Russian tend to say call to (someone) rather than call (someone) (up). Apparently, in those languages the notion reaction obtains with their equivalents of call, while in English it does not. Moreover,

since the person called is conceived of as an affected by English speakers, a situation opposite to the one noted in the introduction of this paper occurs: learners are using a preposition to separate an action from another element where they should not, since that element is an affected.

In respect to circumstance 1d, it is different from the previous circumstances in that notions which determine preposition-usage result not from a relationship among elements superficially represented, but one that must be understood from the context. This circumstance is illustrated by examples 28-29.

28. President Reagan has often spoken about the economy. (Topic)

29a. In Central America the United States has been siding with the wrong group of people, i.e. the military establishment. (Doer)

b. He finally parted with that car after keeping it for ten years. (Doer)

c. You shouldn't interfere with their work. (Activity > doer)

With circumstance 1d, what the learner must do is be able to understand the lexical-rhetorical notion topic or doer from the context. That is, rather than be able to depend on the syntactic juxtaposition of noun and verb which more or less represents the notional association of topic-comment or doer-action, the learner must mentally supply the second component of each association to appreciate the first, which brings about the usage of <u>about</u> or <u>with</u>, respectively. Ultimately, the learner must come to realize that the linguistic function of <u>about</u> is to enable a speaker or writer to introduce a topic or refer to a topic of a past conversation, speech, etc. and that of <u>with</u> is to enable a speaker or writer to talk about two doers but focus on one as the topic of an utterance/sentence.

In retrospect, circumstances 1a, 1d, and two cases each of circumstances 1b and 1c can also involve experiences and comments, as examples 30-33 illustrate. (For circumstance 1a, notions have been randomly selected.)

30a(1). He lives at a hotel. (Location (1a))

(2). He is succeeding in his business. (Activity (1a))

(3). I believe in God. (Doer ⊃ activity (1a) (cf. example 29c))

b(1). She was in the hospital only for a short time. (Location, 3 dimensions (1a))

(2). The Washington Redskins and the Miami Dolphins were in Super Bowl XVII. (Event (1a))

31a. They're having a party by the pool. (⊃ Movement; proximity, intermediate space (1b))

b. They're from Venezuela. (⊃ Movement; location, origin (1b))

32a. He has just recovered from a dangerous illness. (Separation (1c))

b(1). She's blind to his shortcomings. (Reaction (1c))

(2). The two brothers are sure different from each other. (Separation (1c))

33a. She's been having trouble with her car for the last week. (Doer (1d))[2]

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[2] Here a speaker or writer would be talking about an experiencer, as represented by She, and a doer, i.e. car; the experiencer is being focussed on as the topic of the utterance/sentence.

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b. The book is about the Civil War. (Topic (1d))

On the other hand, there are notions which do not occur with actions,

but only with experiences and comments. This phenomenon constitutes circumstance 1e and is illustrated by examples 34-37.

34. The convention is in the spring. (Period of time, understood smaller period of time)

35. He's in the Army. (Organization)

36a. My aunt lives across (the street) from the large yard of an abandoned house. (Location, facing)

b. Troop 1 of the State Police is across from St. Helena's Church. (Location, facing)

37. She needs help; she's in trouble. (Situation)

The multinotional nature of in observable via examples 34, 35, and 37 as well as 2/3, 11, 12, and 26b, needless to say, carries a high potential of distraction for learners which can make acquisition regarding the usage and use of in difficult.

As noted in the introduction of this paper, prepositions can also be brought into play when an entity follows a part of an action, an affected, or an effected. Such instances can be divided into two categories. The first category consists of instances related to circumstances 1a, 1b, 1c, and 1d. The second category consists of instances where other notions obtain. In other words, notions obtaining under the second category are notions which only coexist with parts of actions, affecteds, or effecteds. Examples 38-42 illustrate the first category. (For each circumstance, notions have been randomly selected.)

38a. He did his homework at the library. (Location (1a))

b. They transported the wounded in helicopters. (Location, 3 dimensions (1a))

39. She pushed him to the ground. (Location, destination (1b))

40a. Wilmington has transformed part of its main street into a mall. (Transition (1c))

b. She borrowed two dollars from me and paid it back the next day. (Separation (1c))

41. The boys built their raft from scrap wood. (Thing, origin (1b + 1c))

42a. You shouldn't bother him with this problem. (Doer (1d))

b. Let's help her with the dishes. (Doer (1d), i.e. her, which is also the affected of help)

Regarding examples 38b-41, the affecteds the wounded, him, part of its main street, and two dollars and the effected their raft semantically interact with the elements following the prepositions in those examples as well as with the actions. That is, the doers are displaced by the affecteds and the effected in the triad semantic relationship noted for examples 1-27. Thus, with such utterances/sentences as 38b-41, learners must be consciously or subconsciously careful to shift proper attention from doers to affecteds and effecteds.

As for the second category, notions only coexisting with parts of actions, affecteds, or effecteds fall under circumstance 1f. This circumstance is illustrated by examples 43-44. (In 43a(1) and (2) the UFO and division are parts of actions; in 43b(1) and (2) your paper and the note and in 44a and b Claire and him are affecteds; and in 43c ellipitical a letter is an effected.)

43a(1). They described the UFO to the newspaper reporter. (Recipient)

(2). The teacher's going to teach division to her class today. (Recipient)

b(1). You'll have to submit your paper to the professor by the end of the semester. (Recipient)

(2). He handed the note to his friend. (Recipient)

c. I wrote (a letter) (to) him on June 15. (Recipient)

44a. The receptionist connected Claire with the store manager. (Connection)

b. They provided him with the necessary materials to do the job. (Connection)

Finally, there are two unique circumstances, i.e. 1g and 1h, which are illustrated by examples 45-46, respectively.

45. He was stopped by the police. (Doer)

46a(1). The contract in its present form is not acceptable to us. (Affected)

(2). She's friendly to everyone. (Affected)

b(1). The tax cuts which Reagan has initiated are only beneficial to people who make over $20,000. (Affected)

(2). Children should be obedient to their parents. (Affected)

In example 45 the usage of by is activated by discourse dynamics, in which the affected of the action stop is the topic of the conversation rather than the doer the police. The use of by rather than any other preposition can be justified by the notion cause, which can be associated with it (see Ruffin 1982:18-20); that is, cause can imply the notion doer as well as the notion affected. Although this usage of by could be classified with circumstance 1d because it is determined by discourse, it is relegated to

a circumstance all to itself. To justify this point, it is useful to compare this by-usage with with-usage (circumstance 1d), where the notion doer is also involved. While both usages are contextual in nature, with-usage is quite opaque in comparison with by-usage. While, as noted on page 7, understanding the former requires perception of a notion not superficially represented, i.e. action, understanding the latter requires that one be aware of the topic of a conversation, which is often superficially represented at some point in the conversation.

As for 46a and b, an anomoly obtains in that the notion affected is not related to actions, but to qualities which constitute parts of comments in conjunction with pure topics, i.e. topics that are not doers or experiencers. In some cases, however, an utterance/sentence consisting of a topic and comment can be paraphrased and consist of a doer and action. That is, examples 46b(1) and (2) can be paraphrased as 47a and b.

47a. The tax cuts which Reagan has initiated only benefit people who make over $20,000.

b. Children should obey their parents.

In absolute cases such as examples 46a(1) and (2) where paraphrasing cannot occur, the phenomenon of the notion affected being related to qualities may simply be due to an absence of equivalent actions, whereby expression is limited to topics and comments. In variable cases where paraphrasing can occur, a speaker or writer may opt for one of two lexical-rhetorical relationships: topic-comment or doer-action. In other words, a speaker or writer may unconsciously view a person or thing as a pure topic or as a doer. However, the fact that this choice does not exist with absolute cases is an example of how one's language can sometimes control

one's expression, a phenomenon of which learners must become aware so that they can understand why certain things they may say or write might cause a lack of communication or other negative effects when dealing with native speakers.

Circumstance 2

In contrast to circumstance 1, which depends on notions at the utterance/sentence level, circumstance 2 depends on notions underlying the expression of two or more separate, related utterances/sentences. On the one hand, instances of circumstance 2 can be said to be the result of paraphrasing or simplification. On the other hand, such instances can be said to be stimulated by a desire to render focus on a particular part of a message, e.g. a period of time; the source of such a desire can be either the speaker/writer or interlocutor/correspondent. Examples 48-59 illustrate how two or more utterances/sentences, the a's of the examples, can be combined, and the usage of a preposition results from a particular notion which was only underlying the expression of the two or more utterances/sentences. The b's (and in the case of 48, the c) of each example illustrate that combination; the particular notion is indicated after each b (and after c in the case of 48).

48a. He arrived there in 1976. He left there in 1980.

b. He was there from 1976 to 1980. (Periods of time, understood points in time (circumstance 1c): period of time)

c. He was there for four years. (Period of time)

49a. He moved there in 1940. He is living there now.

b. He has been living there for 43 years. (Period of time)

50a. He started working there in 1980. He is working there now.

b. He has been working there since 1980. (Point of initiation)

51a. She started waiting at 2:00. She stopped waiting at 2:30.

b. She waited until 2:30. (Point of termination)

52a. We are at the office. We'll be leaving the office before or at 6:00. We won't be leaving the office after 6:00.

b. We'll be leaving the office by 6:00. (Deadline-point of completion)

53a. She started working on the assignment at 9:00. She was still working on it at 1:00. She was not working on it at 2:00. The assignment was finished.

b. She finished the assignment within five hours. (Period of time, understood point of completion)

54a. She described the man. He was very tall and muscular.

b. She described the man as very tall and muscular. (Equality)

55a. Her mother likes her father to discuss all matters with her. She likes her husband to discuss all matters with her.

b. Like her mother, she likes her husband to discuss all matters with her. (Similarity)

56a. Her hands are cold. Ice is cold. Her hands and ice have the same coldness.

b. Her hands are as cold as ice. (Comparison)

57a. He committed murder. The court convicted him.

b. The court convicted him of murder. (Attribution of action)

58a. The people had certain rights. The dictator took them away.

b. The dictator deprived the people of their rights. (Termination of experience)

59a. They had a stereo. Someone stole it.

b. Someone robbed them of their stereo. (Termination of comment being applicable)

Preposition-usage as illustrated by examples 48-59 can be divided into circumstances 2a, 2b, and 2c. Circumstance 2a is illustrated by examples 48-53. With this circumstance, learners need to mostly concentrate on the factors of time being focussed on, though awareness of the notions represented by forms such as started in the a's of the examples is also necessary. For example, the difficulty learners have with the notion point of initiation evident through their misuse of since may not lie so much in the notion itself, but what it entails. As illustrated by the second utterance/sentence of 50a, point of initiation is usually connected with present time, a factor which learners seem to overlook; they seem to concentrate on the past time, as illustrated by the first utterance/sentence of 50a, whereby they use in instead of since.

Conversely, there are times when learners use since when the notion point of initiation and its entailed present time do not obtain; in such cases only past time obtains. On the one hand, such misuse of since can stem from a learner's again overlooking the present time behind usage of since, but in this case the learner uses since as if it were in, i.e. for him/her there is no notional distinction behind usage of the two forms. On the other hand, such misuse of since can stem from confusion elsewhere. That is, learners tend to confuse changing actions such as buy and changing experiences such as meet with their resulting experiences consisting of experience-nuclei such as own and know, respectively, when, although related, the former are associated with the past, while the latter are as-

sociated with the past and the present; the expressed time of the former is introduced by in (or on), while that of the latter is introduced by since. It seems that learners have the changing action or experience and the resulting experience in their minds at the same time, a phenomenon that may not be unlike that of native speakers; however, when speaking, learners express the resulting experience but express the time only in terms of the changing action or experience, whereby they misuse since (quantity of time) ago. Such confusion may also affect their use of for in the expression of periods of time as illustrated by examples 48a and 49b, particularly as illustrated by the latter.

Circumstance 2b is illustrated by examples 54, 55, and 56. The notions behind this circumstance, i.e. equality, similarity, and comparison, require attention to topics and the qualities and experiences as well as, when applicable, actions that apply to them. Moreover, since these notions are actually rhetorical, learners, as do native speakers/writers, have more to process than with the notions which are behind circumstance 2a.

Circumstance 2c is illustrated by examples 57, 58, and 59. Actually, attribution and termination as they occur in these examples are not notions, but transitions which affect the notions action, experience, and comment. Circumstance 2c is similar to circumstances 1a, 1b, and 1c in terms of a phenomenon noted for those circumstances in that attribution of action, termination of experience, and termination of comment are activated by notional interaction, as, for example, in 59b, among their stereo, which is part of the comment in the form of a stereo in 59a, the affected, them, and the action, rob, as well as the doer, Someone. In order to appreciate preposition-usage, learners must appreciate that interaction as well as

the relationship between two utterances/sentences, as illustrated by the a's of the examples.

Circumstance 3

Prerequisite to analyzing circumstance 3, it is proposed that in lieu of the usual division of clauses into adverbial, adjectival, and nominal, three groups of rhetorical notions be used as the basis for clause-usage (cf. Ruffin 1982). Within the organization set forth in this paper, those three groups of rhetorical notions can constitute circumstances 3a, 3b, and 3c. Examples 60-66 illustrate circumstance 3a. The notion is given after the (1) of each example, which contains a clausal structure; the (2) illustrates modification via an appropriate preposition.

60a(1). After we have supper, we'll play cards. (Sequentiality)

(2). After supper, we'll play cards.

b(1). Before the party started, they checked to see if everything was ready. (Sequentiality)

(2). Before the party, they checked to see if everything was ready.

61a(1). While he is eating breakfast, he usually reads the newspaper. (Simultaneity)

(2). During breakfast, he usually reads the newspaper.

b(1). When one is a worker for this company, s/he should be highly conscious about producing a quality-product. (Simultaneity of comments (vis-a-vis actions, as in a))

(2). As a worker for this company, one should be highly conscious about producing a quality-product.

62a(1). Since he came here to this job, he's had difficulties

adjusting. (Point of initiation (cf. example 50))

(2). Since coming here to this job, he's had difficulties adjusting.

b(1). Until Citations started being recalled, he had been quite happy with his; now he's worried and wishes he hadn't bought one. (Point of termination (cf. example 51))

(2). Until the recall, he had been quite happy with his Citation; now he's worried and wishes he hadn't bought one.

63a(1). She works as if she were a machine. (Manner of action)

(2). She works like a machine.

b(1). Until they select a chairperson for the department, it has been decided that Dr. P will act as if he were the designated chairperson. (Manner of action)

(2). Until they select a chairperson for the department, Dr. P will act as chairperson.

64a(1). Because his father died, he is mourning. (Cause)

(2). He is mourning for his father.

b(1). Because you helped me, I'm grateful. (Cause)

(2). I'm grateful for your help.

c(1). Because he was so ignorant of the matter, we were astonished. (Cause, spontaneity)

(2). We were astonished at his ignorance of the matter.

65a(1). He's calling so that he may get some advice. (Purpose)

(2). He's calling for some advice.

b(1). They were protesting so that American involvement in El Salvador would stop. (Purpose, negation)

(2). They were protesting against American involvement in El Salvador.

66a(1). Although they weren't happy, the others were. (Contrast)

(2). They weren't happy like the others.

b(1). While they were happy, the others were happier. (Contrast)

(2). They weren't as happy as the others.

Two observations can be made regarding circumstance 3a. First, an utterance/sentence related to 64b(1) is I'm grateful that you helped me, where a predication as part of a comment (temporary quality) (see circumstance 3c) obtains. Such an interrelationship between the rhetorical notion of 64b(1) and the rhetorical notion of the latter example can lead learners to overlook the rhetorical notion of that example. Furthermore, learners that have been exposed to utterances/sentences such as 64b(1) and (2) and I'm grateful that-utterances/sentences may possibly incorrectly relate 64b(2) to the I'm grateful that-utterance/sentence instead of 64b(1), whereby cause would at the most be considered as only the underlying rhetorical notion rather than the crux of the message.

Second, learners can get confused between the similar rhetorical notional pairs cause-effect and modus operandi-purpose. This confusion can be compounded by for's introducing causes with the former pair, as in examples 64a(2) and b(2), but introducing purposes, a kind of effect, with the latter pair, as in example 65a(2).

Examples 67 and 68 illustrate circumstance 3b, which, more specifically, involves the linguistic functions narrow classification and specification. (There is also a third function related to these two, the function of adding information, as illustrated by He made some notes on a piece of paper, which he then

quickly put in his pocket (taken from Frank 1972b:57). For this function, there will be no examples; suffice it to say that except for of the function of adding information implicates the same prepositions as narrow classification and specification.)

67a(1). I would like to see a picture which shows you at your graduation. (Narrow classification)

(2). I would like to see a picture of you at your graduation.

b(1). People who live in Brazil speak Portuguese, not Spanish. (Narrow classification)

(2). People in Brazil speak Portuguese, not Spanish.

c(1). A train which goes to New York takes about two hours. (Narrow classification)

(2). A train to New York takes about two hours.

d(1). We need somebody who has a car. (Narrow classification)

(2). We need somebody with a car.

68a(1). The president who heads Temple University was inaugurated on July 1, 1982. (Specification)

(2). The president of Temple University was inaugurated on July 1, 1982.

b(1). The blanket which is covering her grandmother's bed is very old. (Specification)

(2). The blanket on her grandmother's bed is very old.

c(1). The entrance by which one can enter their garden is bordered by roses. (Specification)

(2). The entrance into their garden is bordered by roses.

d(1). The memo which announces the meeting will be distributed tomorrow. (Specification)

(2). The memo about the meeting will be distributed tomorrow.

There is one important point to be made regarding examples 67 and 68. Of can be said to be basic to narrow classification and specification in that it is functionally neutral. That is, one can merely attribute narrow classification to of you (at your graduation) in 67a(2) and specification to of Temple University in 68a(2). On the other hand, in's usage in 67b(2) and on's usage in 68b(2) could be attributed to circumstance 1a as based on the notions location and 2 dimensions and location and 1 dimension, respectively; to's usage in 67c(2) and into's usage in 68c(2) could be analyzed according to circumstance 1b as based on the notions location and destination and location, 2 dimensions, and destination, respectively; and with's usage in 67d(2) and about's usage in 68d(2) could be analyzed according to circumstance 1d as based on the lexical-rhetorical notions doer and topic, respectively.

It is in fact important that one be aware that narrow classification and specification can implicate those circumstances, for it is possible that learners may only process an utterance/sentence according to the notions of those circumstances and not appreciate the functions intended by the speaker or writer. This situation may be more likely to occur with a sentence such as He mails the letter in the mailbox on the corner (taken from Markstein and Grunbaum 1982:13), where in(to) the mailbox is attributable to circumstance 1b, whereas on the corner is not only attributable to circumstance 1a, but is also a specification.

Examples 69-72 illustrate circumstance 3c.

69a(1). The board approves that the plan should be put into action. (Predication as part of an experience)

(2). The board approves of the plan.

b(1). They feel/believe that he is the best person for the job. (Predication as part of an experience)

(2). They regard him as the best person for the job.

c(1). You must beware that the dog is dangerous. (Predication as part of an experience)

(2). You must beware of the dog.

70a(1). That you brought her flowers was thoughtful. (Predication as a topic)

(2). It was thoughtful that you brought her flowers.

(3). It was thoughtful of you to bring her flowers.

b(1). That he didn't complain at all was polite. (Predication as a topic)

(2). It was polite that he didn't complain at all.

(3). It was polite of him not to complain at all.

71a(1). The policeman advised him that he had certain rights. (Predication as a topic in conjunction with advise)

(2). The policeman advised him of his rights.

b(1). He tried to convince the court that he was innocent. (Predication as a topic in conjunction with convince)

(2). He tried to convince the court of his innocence.

72a(1). Many people are afraid that snakes may hurt them. (Predication as part of a comment)

(2). Many people are afraid of snakes.

b(1). He's happy that his new job is so great. (Predication as part of a comment)

(2). He's happy about his new job.[3]

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[3] About differs from of in that it seems to be used exclusively with activities, such as job.

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c(1). He looks as if he were his father. (Predication as part of a comment)

(2). He looks like his father.

In general, it can be observed that of is used in the modification of all the notions of circumstance 3c; this phenomenon can be distracting to learners in that they may not be able to appreciate the distinction among those four notions because of of's ubiquity. Moreover, distraction is compounded by of's being also used with the functions noted under circumstance 3b and the phenomena noted under circumstance 2c.

More specifically, it should be noted that 72a and b are clearly related to utterances/sentences expressing the rhetorical notions cause-effect. For example, 72a is related to Because snakes may hurt them, many people are afraid. Nevertheless, for some reason, it is the utterance/sentence containing a predication as part of a comment that is amenable to modification involving a preposition, not the utterance/sentence expressing the rhetorical notions cause-effect. This phenomenon may cause learners who may respond to the underlying notions rather than the superficial notion to fail to appreciate the usage of of as well as about (cf. first observation made in respect to circumstance 3c on page 19).

Circumstance 4

With circumstance 4, there are instances where a preposition is used as a result of analogy. That is, there are cases of usage which seem to be

examples of circumstance 3, but because such utterances/sentences are not derivable from utterances/sentences containing clausal structures, they must be relegated to a circumstance of their own. Examples 73-77 illustrate this phenomenon; the notion behind usage of a particular preposition is indicated after each example.

73. They worked there during the summer. (Simultaneity)

74a. I laughed at him. (Cause, spontaneity)

b. The others stared at them. (Cause, spontaneity)

75a. The farmers are hoping for rain. (Purpose,

b. Many people in Delaware work for the Dupont Company. (Purpose)

c. Joe will substitute for Mary. (Purpose)

76a. I dreamt of you last night. (Part of an experience)

b. Whenever he thinks of his deceased brother, he cries. (Part of an experience)

77a(1). The class consists of students from different countries. (Part of a comment)

(2). That room smells of cigarettes and beer. (Part of a comment)

b. The group is composed of people from all over the world. (Part of a comment)

c(1). The building is full of offices. (Part of a comment)

(2). She's fond of her dogs. (Part of a comment)

(3). He's tired of his job. (Part of a comment)

One can note that the notions of circumstance 4 randomly coincide with notions of circumstance 3: three notions are shared with circumstance 3a (examples 73, 74, and 75); none are shared with circumstance 3b; and two are shared with circumstance 3c (examples 76 and 77). Thus, within the

analytical framework of this paper and in conjunction with circumstance 3, circumstance 4 can be divided into circumstances 4a, 4b, and 4c, with 4b being represented by ∅. Such disparity of cross-over may contribute to learning-difficulty in the learning and acquisition of preposition-usage. That is, based on the premise that learners either consciously or unconsciously seek out systems when they are learning a second language (cf. Zamel 1981:142-3), the lack of a systematic cross-over between circumstance 3 and circumstance 4 may obstruct learning and acquisition of the usage and use of the prepositions involved. For example, if a learner somehow senses that circumstance 4 applies to certain notions that fall under circumstance 3, s/he may try to incorrectly extend the application of the former circumstance. Consequently, when confronted with a notion that only falls under circumstance 3, instead of mentally supplying the omitted elements of an utterance/sentence containing a clausal structure according to circumstance 3, such a learner could depend on a more abstract context, the type affiliated with circumstance 4. In short, the learner could be mentally applying him-/herself more than is necessary. Of course, as far as notions which fall under both circumstances are concerned, learners have to somehow become aware of when a notion is occurring according to one or the other circumstance so that s/he knows how much s/he has to mentally apply him-/herself, i.e. whether s/he has to process an underlying (semiexplicit) context according to circumstance 3 or a more abstract (implicit) context according to circumstance 4.

Circumstance 5

To illustrate circumstance 5, examples 78-80 consist of two parts as with circumstances 3 and 2; however, the second part is not meant to be

interpreted as a derivation of the first part, but as a paraphrase of that part. The notions involved are indicated after the first part of each example.

78a(1). Because she is always helpful, we know that she will help us. (Cause)

(2). We know that we can count on her (to help us).

b(1). Because you did something bad, I'm going to tell Mommy and Daddy. (Cause)

(2). I'm going to tell on you.

c(1). Because I think you were the one who caused the damage to my car, I'm blaming you. (Cause)

(2). I'm blaming the damage to my car on you.

d(1). Because the events of the day held a possible answer to his problem, he thought about them carefully. (Cause)

(2). He reflected on the events of the day.

e(1). Because the enemy was planning a massive offensive, heavy casualties had to be inflicted. (Cause)

(2). Heavy casualties had to be inflicted on the enemy(, who was planning a massive offensive).

f(1). Because breaking up Fred and Melody will give her a chance at Fred, she's trying everything to get them apart. (Cause)

(2). She's intent on breaking up Fred and Melody.

g(1). Because the TOEFL is so important to you, I wish you good luck. (Cause)

(2). Good luck on the TOEFL.

79a(1). Whenever others are sad, she seems to enjoy it. (Inde-

finite time reference, cause)

(2). She seems to feed on the sadness of others.

b(1). When Wednesday comes, he goes down to the shore. (Definite time reference, cause)

(2). He goes down to the shore on Wednesdays.

c(1). When it's Monday, Tuesday, or Thursday, he's at class. (Definite time reference, cause)

(2). He has class on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays.

80a(1). If he helps, our project will be a success. If he doesn't, it's liable to fail. (Condition)

(2). The success of our project depends on him.

b(1). If the weather is good, we'll go to the beach. (Condition)

(2). Our going to the beach depends on the weather.

c(1). Unless his parents do for him, he's lost. (Condition)

(2). He's dependent on his parents.

Similar to circumstance 4, circumstance 5 entails an appreciation of context. However, unlike circumstance 4, there is not a connection through analogy between circumstances 5 and 3; the notions which occur under circumstance 5 are not appreciated through a processing of context which is reinforced by a more clearly definable usage, as is the relationship between circumstances 4 and 3. In fact, there is really no connection between circumstances 5 and 3 outside of a shared notion, as exhibited by examples 78a-g. While the occurrence of larger utterances/sentences is related to both circumstances, the nature of the relationship is different for each circumstance. Even though simplification plays a role in both circumstances, it is fulfilled through modification, usually reduction,

based on the phenomenon of derivation with circumstance 3, whereas with circumstance 5, simplification is fulfilled through paraphrasing, in which a perceivable structural connection between two utterances/sentences is absent.

In terms of learning, making such a distinction between these two circumstances is relevant, for each necessitates a different form of processing on the part of a speaker/writer. While derivation is transparent and can even be demonstrated to learners if the need arises, the connection between two utterances/sentences through paraphrasing is somewhat opaque and cannot be as easily demonstrated. In other words, circumstance 5 can be more difficult to learn and acquire than circumstance 3.

Implications and Applications

The overall implication of the preceding analyses is that forms designated as prepositions cannot be simply analyzed as prepositions of time, prepositions of place, and those which are basically defined by the verb or adjective they follow. Ironically, the fact that the nature of these tiny words has been simplified for pedagogical consideration has very likely contributed to the difficulty and perhaps even frustration learners have suffered in learning and acquiring their usage and use. It is thus advocated here that to facilitate input and encourage intake (assimilation) on the part of learners as far as the usage and use of prepositions are concerned, learners must somehow be made aware that there are various circumstances based on notions which serve as the bases for the occurrence of prepositions in communication. Also, being aware of these circumstances can allay confusion with prepositions such as <u>of</u>, <u>on</u>, <u>for</u>, and <u>about</u>, which can each be used under quite different circumstances.

However, it is not proposed here that teachers laboriously analyze and enumerate the circumstances of usage for their learners. In addition to being a suggested model for the analysis of preposition-usage, for this paper is not considered to represent a comprehensive study, the analyses offered in this paper are meant to be a resource for teachers to use when they find all, some, or one of their learners having difficulty. In other words, if all the learners of a particular group can properly use a particular preposition, there is no reason why a teacher should analyze its usage and use. On the other hand, even if all or some members of a group have difficulty with a particular preposition, it is advised that the teacher first provide natural opportunities for his/her learners to express themselves (cf. Taylor 1982:36-7) in which the problem preposition can be elicited and in which learners who can use the preposition can help those who cannot. Only after the teacher feels that the problem is persistent, should s/he utlilize the appropriate analysis to explain. For example, if a learner has difficulty using <u>in</u> and <u>on</u>, according to circumstance 1a, the teacher can have him/her focus on the dimensions of locations discerning whether a location has three, two, or one dimension. Or, if a learner has difficulty using <u>during</u>, according to circumstance 3a, the teacher can demonstrate the process of derivation where a clause introduced by <u>while</u> is reduced and the remaining element or elements are introduced by <u>during</u>. Of course, prerequisite to demonstrating derivation, the learner should know what notion is being expressed, e.g. in the case of <u>during</u>, simultaneity.

Also, of course, when learners solicit explanations concerning preposition-usage, the analyses offered herein afford the teacher a viable and

cogent means of explanation. Too often it seems learners have been left with the impression that preposition-usage in English is an illogical mystery. Therefore, to eliminate that mystery, learners should be entitled to explanations by which they can perceive the logic of preposition-usage in English.

Finally, in view of the diversity behind preposition-usage, perhaps it would be wise to abandon the term preposition altogether. Literally and structurally, the term denotes a word that is placed before another word or phrase. As for their placement before nonparts of actions, nonaffecteds, and noneffecteds or before elements which occur after parts of actions, affecteds, and effecteds, perhaps the term has some worth. However, vis-a-vis the notions behind the usage and use of these tiny words, this structural aspect of these entities is only a preliminary, as observed in the introduction, in learning and acquiring them. In the first place, a term such as preposition is only necessary in classrooms where English is talked about rather than used and developed. In the second place, such a term is only necessary in books and syllabi which divide English into structures as an end in themselves rather than into notions and functions, which can portray wholly different structures as a means of expressing a particular notion and/or performing a particular communicative function. All in all, the term preposition provides at the most minimal service to the learning and acquisition processes, and, needless to say, all to which the learner is exposed in the classroom should optimally contribute to those processes. Aiding those processes has been the objective of the analyses presented in this paper.

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